

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-11. (cancelled)

12. (New) A method of delivering energy to tissue, the method comprising:  
providing a surgical apparatus that includes a reinforced electrode surface, the electrode surface being formed by a conductive cap coupled to and enclosing a conductive plate; and  
delivering energy to tissue using the reinforced electrode surface.

13. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the cap encloses at least part of a distal portion of an elongated probe.

14. (New) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein:  
the elongated probe defines a lumen and the distal portion of the elongated probe defines an opening in communication with the lumen, and  
the plate covers at least part of the opening.

15. (New) A method of delivering energy to tissue, the method comprising:  
providing a surgical apparatus that includes  
a handle including a distal portion,  
an elongated probe coupled to the distal portion of the handle and including a distal portion,  
a conductive plate coupled to the distal portion of the elongated probe, and

a conductive cap coupled to and enclosing the plate and forming an electrode surface; and

delivering energy to tissue using the electrode surface.

16. (New) The method of claim 15 wherein:  
the elongated probe defines a lumen and the distal portion of the elongated probe defines an opening in communication with the lumen, and  
the plate covers at least part of the opening.

17. (New) The method of claim 15 wherein delivering energy comprises delivering radio frequency energy.